

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BRUSSE 01814 031839Z

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-07 L-02

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FM AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3270

INFO AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

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E.O. 11652:NA

TAGS: PINS BE

SUBJECT: SOCIALIST PARTY ELECTS CLAES AND COOLS CO-PRESIDENTS

AND RENEWS BUREAU

REF: BRUSSELS A254#

BRUSSELS 01705

BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED

1. BELGIAN SOCIALIST PARTY (PSB) HELD ADMINISTRATIVE CONGRESS IN ANTWERP MARCH 1 TO ELECT CO-PRESIDENTS AND POLITICAL BUREAU, WHICH IS PARTY'S NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE. ANDRE COOLS WAS RE-ELECTED CO-PRESIDENT UNOPPOSED. WILLY CLAES, AT 36 THE YOUNGEST SOCIALIST PARTY PRESIDENT EVER, RAN UNOPPOSED TO REPLACE RETIRING FLEMISH CO-PRESIDENT JOS VAN EYNDE. PARTY ALSO REPLACED 10 MEMBERS OF 24-MEMBER BUREAU, IN MOST CASES ELECTING YOUNGER MEN. AVERAGE AGE OF NEW MEMBERS OF BUREAU IS 45 YEARS. AMONG NEW MEMBERS ARE GUY SPITALE, ROBERT URBAIN AND JEAN MAURICE DEHOUSSE, ALL INTERNATIONAL VISITOR GRANTEE IN FY74-75.

2. COOLS AND CLAES EMPHASIZED IN THEIR ACCEPTANCE SPEECHES THAT SOCIALIST PARTY IS NOT EAGER TO ENTER GOVERNMENT

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PAGE 02 BRUSSE 01814 031839Z

NOW AND THAT ANY ENTRY WOULD HAVE TO BE BASED ON SOME ACCEPTANCE

OF SOCIALIST PARTY-TRADE UNION (PSB AND FG TB) COMMON PLAN OF ACTION. BOTH SPEAKERS CENTERED THEIR PARTISAN FIRE ON FLEMISH WING OF SOCIAL CHRISTIAN PARTY (CVP), CHARGING IT WITH IN-EQUITABLE DOMINATION OF TINDEMANS GOVERNMENT COALITION. END UNCLASSIFIED.

3. COMMENT: INDICATIONS ARE SOCIALISTS WANT SIX MONTHS TO ESTABLISH "NEW ORDER" IN PARTY STRUCTURE AND UNIFY ORGANIZATION BEFORE ENGAGING IN TALKS WITH SOCIALIST CHRISTIANS ON RE-ENTRY INTO GOVERNMENT. NEW MEMBERS OF BUREAU BRING NOT ONLY YOUNGER ELEMENTS INTO TOP ECHELONS BUT ALSO SHIFT CENTER OF GRAVITY OF SOCIALIST LEADERSHIP SOMEWHAT TO THE LEFT. THIS IS IN KEEPING WITH TREND SET BY SOCIALIST DOCTRINAL CONGRESS LAST NOVEMBER. (SEE REPAIR.) FIRESTONE

NOTE BY OC/T: #AS RECEIVED.

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Margaret P. Grafeld
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